

Echoes

"ONE of the reasons for the so-called failure of Zionism, as I see it, is that Zionism, an almost 21st century ideal, is trying to impose itself upon a dead 12th century civilisation."

—HANNEN SWAFFER.

A Reference

A SITUATION has arisen in one of our communities which prompts me to tell the story of the Rav who came to a small town looking for a position. The *balabatim* of the town met him and asked for his references.

He showed a written recommendation from the *Gaon* of a large neighbouring city, which stated that the Rav was like Shakespeare, like Moshe Rabbeinu and like the Almighty. With such references, he was immediately engaged. But on the very first Sabbath he proved to be such a failure, that the townsfolk were disgusted.

Some of the leaders took it upon themselves to travel to the *Gaon* and ask him why he had given the Rav such a recommendation. "What I have written," said the *Gaon*, "is absolutely true, but I'm afraid you've taken the wrong meaning out of it. What I meant was that he knows as much Hebrew as Shakespeare, that he knows as much English as Moses, and that the Almighty is not a *mensch*, neither is this Rav a *mensch*."

The Shadchan

"Don't worry about her family," said the Shadchan to the reluctant young man. "Her family is of the best. Besides, you'll never have to support any member of it; the girl is an orphan."

A few days after the engagement was announced the young man assaulted the Shadchan.

"You fraud!" he shouted. "An orphan, indeed! I've found out that the girl's father is not only living, but in prison!"

"Ah," groaned the Shadchan, "you can't call that 'living'!"

Two at a Time

THE latest Goldwynism may go down in history of literature as a thumbnail description of our present literary epoch; after the recent success of a Soviet film he asked his writers to find him something typically Russian, preferably Tolstoyevsky.

the intellectualist tradition. We have already seen the place occupied by scholarship in the popular mind of the Jews. Here was a folk which for two thousand years had given to the scholar the place of honour reserved by other peoples for the warrior and ruler. Jewish mothers rocking their cradles in Kasrievky sang to their babies of high careers in the sacred studies; and even the popular songs of grown-ups celebrated the delights of learning. Such songs are quite grotesque in English. As, for instance:

See the peasant run into the inn,
To snatch a drop of brandy;
See the Jew run to the study house,
To snatch a page of Talmud.

The outlandish effect is heightened by the rollicking melody. We shall understand the untranslatability of the song if we try to imagine a group of English barges making the welkin ring with:

Come, landlord, bring us a page of Shakespeare . . .

Serious and Otherwise

* by ben dor *

Hail the King

IN vain I scanned the list of twenty-nine parties standing for election to the Assephat Hanivcharim. There was no Royalist Party. It is clear that the Jewish Royal family intends to hold itself aloof from Party politics.

For the benefit of those who have not heard of the King of Jerusalem, let me offer a little information, gleaned from the Hebrew press. He is a dental practitioner and his present name is Dr. Solnik.

He has an infant son, Emmanuel, who is the first pretender to the Jewish throne since the fall of Jerusalem. The infant has just celebrated his first birthday with royal pomp in a sumptuous "palace" at Rehavia. It is rumoured that a golden diadem was placed on the heir's head, but a High Priest was apparently out of reach.

The "king" himself is one of the most exotic persons in the Holy City, and fits admirably into the entire landscape of a city full of curiosities, such as Messiahs, would-be kings, astrologers, fortune-tellers, etc.

Dr. Solnik has quite a convincing pedigree. Don Isaac Abarbanel, Treasurer to the King of Spain, Alfonso V, emigrated to Italy after the expulsion of the Jews from Spain. In the course of time his descendants dispersed all over Europe. One of them, Abraham Benjamin, who was also named De Saloniki, after Saloniki, came over to Poland, and the present dentist, Dr. Solnik, is a descendant of this member of the Abarbanel family, and thus also of King David.

The budget of the kingdom is already assured, according to Dr. Solnik. A certain Mrs. Sarah Abarbanel died in Paris in 1886, leaving a fabulous fortune to the true descendant of Don Isaac Abarbanel. The woman was Spanish, and the money is still deposited with the Spanish Government. Many people have attempted to establish their titles, but so far no one has succeeded. Dr. Solnik has applied for it both diplomatically and legally, and is quite sure he will get it.

And now for the "King's" foreign policy:

The "King" has extensive political plans. He has written to Mr. Winston Churchill, and received a reply, though he refuses to disclose its contents. He plans to leave shortly for the U.S.A. in order to submit his ideas to President Roosevelt. He also seems to place much hope in the assistance of General de Gaulle.

In the meanwhile the "King" is doing a useful job of work among his subjects. One wonders how the little "Prince" will fare at school.

From Concentration Camp to Orchestra

AT the beginning of July a special concert was held by the Palestine Orchestra in Tel Aviv. It was conducted by Professor Lav Mirski, a famous Yugoslavian conductor, who arrived in Palestine at the beginning of June with the latest group of refugees.

Professor Mirski had been held in a concentration camp in Southern Italy, where he helped to maintain a high standard of music among the Jewish prisoners. He assembled Jewish operatic students and other prisoners, and formed a men's choir of 40 voices. He also organised a choir for the camp's Catholic Church, and later a Greek Orthodox Church choir when prisoners were brought to the camp from Greece. At first

two well-known musicians accompanied the singers with accordions, but later a piano was provided by the Italian Government. And then the Pope sent an organ from Rome, and the performances were attended by the commandant's Italian guests.

Professor Mirski was one of the many prisoners freed by the Palestinian Jewish units in Italy. After the liberation of Southern Italy by the Allies, the Bari symphony orchestra was founded, consisting of 60 refugee musicians from Florence, Rome and other places. Professor Mirski led the orchestra, and gave many concerts for the entertainment of the troops.

After conducting orchestras, operas and oratorios in Zagreb, Belgrade, Budapest, Prague, and then in Nazi concentration camps, Professor Mirski will continue his life of musical activity in Eretz Israel, and will help to enrich its cultural life.

Rene Blum

RENE BLUM, brother of the former French Premier, Leon Blum, and world-famous theatrical manager, recently died in a Paris prison, according to the French Underground newspaper, "Fraternité."

In 1936 Rene Blum visited South Africa as the director of the Ballet de Monte Carlo. He was tall, of aristocratic appearance—a typical French type. During his visit he said to a representative of the "Zionist Record," "When Germany lost the Jews, she lost her artistic prestige in the world."

For hundreds of years the Blum family lived in Alsace, where his father was a silk merchant. Both his parents were very *frum*, and the sons all learnt Hebrew. The home was kosher, and Friday night was observed in all its tradition and sanctity. Both Rene and his illustrious socialist brother, Leon, were keenly interested in Palestine.

Speaking of himself, Mr. Blum said: "Yes, I have done many things in my life—'litteraire directeur' of a large library, writer for many journals, and I have given many lectures in France. For the past fourteen years I have been artistic director at the Theatre de Monte Carlo."

On the same occasion he spoke of the important part Jews played in the public life of France, especially in artistic creation. There were many men of learning, directors of theatres and of the fine arts.

In 1936 Rene Blum said that the success of his brother's Government in France had been a very great thing for the Jews. Not very long afterwards, Leon Blum was sent to a German prison, and Rene was interned in France.

Last week there were various conflicting rumours about the reported death of Leon Blum in Germany.

Who Is Crazy?

HARRY HERSHFIELD likes to tell the story of the lunatic asylum in Germany whose director, expecting a visit from the Fuehrer, drilled all the inmates so that their "heiling" and saluting would testify to the complete Nazification of that institution. . . . So Hitler came, and in every padded cell and every less isolated ward each and every man and woman greeted him in true Nazi fashion. . . . All, that is, but one man. . . . Hitler eyed him with indignation. . . . "Why don't you salute me?" he roared. . . . "Who, me?" exclaimed the man. . . . "I'm the keeper—I'm not crazy." . . .

LUNCH AND DINE

AT THE LUXURIOUS NEW

Luthje's Langham Hotel Restaurant

A la carte or Table-d'hôte

84 KERK STREET
TELEPHONE 22-5844

GLUES

- FOR STICKING
- CARDBOARD to
- CARDBOARD
- PAPER to PAPER
- PAPER to TIN
- PAPER to WET BOTTLES
- PAPER to DRY BOTTLES
- PAPER to IRON
- CORK to METAL
- QUICK & SLOW DRYING
- GLUES
- FLEXIBLE & WATERPROOF
- BINDERS & STIFFENERS

Products of the
ADHESIVE DIVISION
GENERAL CHEMICAL CORPORATION, LIMITED
His Majesty's Buildings,
JOHANNESBURG
P.O. Box 3389. Phones 33-9926/7/8

GEORGE TIMBER CO.

J. R. URBAN & SONS.
Suppliers of:—
Building Material, Joinery,
Boxes, Fruit Trays,
Yokes, Swingles,
Firewood, Boots & Shoes.
WRITE FOR QUOTATIONS.
P.O. Box 18. Phone 40.
GEORGE.